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ABSTRACT

This unit is designed for students in grades 6-12. The unit provides an introduction to Sierra Leone and the continent of Africa through basic concepts and a conceptual framework for learning. The unit is divided into 17 activities. Activities include: (1) "Stereotypes and Myths about African and Africans"; (2) "The Manding Name Game"; (3) "Common Names in Sierra Leone"; (4) "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 1"; (5) "Education in Sierra Leone"; (6) "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 2" (7) "Islam in Africa"; (8) "The Arabic Alphabet"; (9) "Arabic Numbers"; (10) "The Marketplace"; (11) "Proverbs in Sierra Leone"; (12) "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 3"; (13) "Geography in Sierra Leone"; (14) "Recipes from Sierra Leone and West Africa"; (15) "Crossword Puzzle"; (16) "Sierra Leone Bee"; and (17) "Writing an Essay on Sierra Leone." A 16-item bibliography section concludes the unit. (EH)

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Life in Sierra Leone, West Africa

S. K. Clarke

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Center for Teaching International Relations
University of Denver

University of Arkansas - Monticello

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LIFE IN SIERRA LEONE WEST AFRICA

A Teaching Unit

by
Richard A. Corby

with
Pamela Boyd, Rosemary Brewer, Joen Bryant, Deborah Cockrell, Karen Eoff, Bettina Fletcher, Glenn Ford, Williefene Ford, Kay Grant, Earnestine Lang, Connie McKinney, Jerome Muldrew, John Polk, Andrew Roshell, John Way and JoAnn Williams

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LET'S BID FAREWELL TO TARZAN

Teacher's Introduction

Stereotypes and myths about Africa still abound in U.S.-published materials and in the media. Some of these distortions are obvious to discerning readers, others are more difficult to detect. These stereotypes and myths contribute to the "Tarzan" image of Africa that many of our students develop about the continent and retain throughout their lifetimes. Teachers try to combat the negative impressions of these stereotypes by conveying accurate information to their students and encouraging them to discover for themselves in reliable sources the realities of African life and culture. This is, of course, a necessity in classroom instruction on any subject, but in studying about Africa it is not enough. Students are fully capable of learning facts about the continent and still retaining the stereotypes and misconceptions they share with the adult population. And they cling to their misconceptions even when what they have learned flatly contradicts the stereotypes they hold! Therefore, stereotypes and myths must be confronted head-on in the classroom.

Let us explore some of the most pervasive of these stereotypes. Word usage indicates the ideas and attitudes held by a person. Words which convey negative connotations reflect the inaccuracies and distortions about the entire subject in the students' minds. One way to change these stereotypic notions is to replace the words which convey these images with words which more accurately depict reality. "African" should be used, not "native," or even worse, "savage." "Tribe," whose dictionary definitions is "a nation or family of primitive people," does not accurately describe African peoples' complex social organization and notable cultural, political, and economic accomplishments--so why continue to use this loaded word? Try "ethnic group" instead, the words we would use if we were referring to the Catalans of Spain or the Welsh of Great Britain. Africans live in houses not "huts," they speak languages not "dialects," they wear clothes not "costumes," they have religions not "cults," and the specialists who are consulted by people in

traditional African religion are diviners, not "witch doctors." This is a bare beginning toward expunging our vocabulary of inaccurate, negative words when discussing Africa. Be alert! You will be able to spot more in your own reading and in the media. As a general rule, if you wouldn't use a word to describe European or North American people, customs, institutions, or practices, then do not use that word when referring to the equivalent in African society.

Myths about the continent are numerous and should be challenged. For instance, what few large animals there are do not live in the "jungle" but on the savannas--the grasslands--which make up about 40 percent of the continent's area. The "jungle" on the other hand comprises only about 5 percent of the continent's land and in any case should be called "rain forest." Africa is not uniformly hot. Highland areas have a mild year-round climate and even at many lower elevations the temperatures seldom rise about the mideighties. A very pervasive myth is that Africans are "savages" whose culture has remained unchanged, embalmed through time, for untold generations until Westerners arrived about a hundred years ago to bring them "civilization." Africans, of course, have throughout the centuries adapted, adopted, and invented different ways to cope with old problems and to meet new challenges. Change is, and has always been, a fact of life in Africa as much as it has been anywhere else. Related to this theme is the idea that Europeans and North Americans are responsible for whatever is "modern" in African life. Pictures and texts often show Africans as passive recipients of Western largesse rather than active participants and innovators. Beware of a book or article which abounds with such verb constructions as "The Africans are shown," "are taught," "are helped," "are informed," or "are given."

Too often U.S. publications and media choose the exotic, the atypical, to portray life on the continent. It is very common for a textbook which uses the cultural approach to select such ethnic groups as the pastoral Maasai of East Africa, the "pygmies" of Central Africa, and the "Bushman" of Namibia and Botswana to exemplify Africa peoples. But these people number only a few thousand, have cultures which are not like the vast majority, and give no more representative view

of Africa than a study of the United States which discussed only the Seminoles of southern Florida and the Amish of central Illinois. If you want to study Africa through the cultural approach, why not select peoples whose historical experience and numbers place them in the "mainstream" of African life? The Manding of West Africa, the Mende of Sierra Leone, the Yoruba of Nigeria, the Kpelle of Liberia, the Akan of Ghana, the Kikuyu of Kenya, or the Zulu of South Africa would give a more representative insight into African cultures. Even prestigious organizations like the National Geographic Society in its television programs and articles in its magazine are often guilty of emphasizing ethnic groups with the least technological resources such as certain nomadic groups, to the exclusion of townspeople and farmers.

It is important to assist students to recognize these stereotypes and myths when they are encountered in books, newspapers, magazines, or on television. With some experience they will be able to spot the buzz words and the exotic and to replace these with more accurate words and concepts. By so doing they will have made great strides toward seeing Africans as people with needs, hopes, fears, and aspirations which are shared by people everywhere but who have worked out solutions to their problems and opportunities in their own way, some of which are different from our own. By recognizing these differences and similarities we can help our students view Africans as a vital part of the world community--people whose study is rewarded by many insights into our common humanity.

1. STEREOTYPES AND MYTHS ABOUT AFRICA AND AFRICANS

Introduction

There are many distorted or just plain wrong views of Africans and their continent. The media, movies, books, textbooks have all contributed to forming and perpetuating these ideas.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify and recognize myths and stereotypes commonly held about Africa and Africans.
- Collect myths and stereotypes from different sources.
- Combat these myths and stereotypes as the students begin to develop new ideas, attitudes, and word usages.

Materials

Paper and pencils
3" x 5" cards (or pieces of paper)
Handout 1-1, "Sierra Leone: Background Information"

Procedures

1. The teacher should be familiar with the material in "Let's Bid Farewell to Tarzan" in the Teacher's Introduction.

2. Ask the students to make their minds a blank and then write down the first three things which occur to them after you pronounce a certain word. Then you say, "Africa." Give the students about 30 or 40 seconds to list the first three things which occur to them. If you have a typical group of students, many of the common stereotypes and myths will come out in this exercise.

3. Ask the students what they wrote down and write their replies on the chalkboard. If some students only have written one or two items, or maybe none at all, that, too, is revealing. You could group the responses into such categories as people, climate, wildlife, word usage, etc.

4. Discuss the meaning of "stereotype" and "myths."

5. Lead a discussion of the words and phrases on the chalkboard in regard to stereotypes and myths.

6. Divide the class into groups of four or five and ask each group to put a stereotype or myth on one 3" x 5" card and then to write the reality, or better word usage, concerning this particular stereotype or myth on another 3" x 5" card. The students may not have enough information to write the "reality" at this time, but they can do so as they gain the necessary knowledge and understanding while the study of Sierra Leone and Africa progresses.

7. For one week have each group collect stereotypes and devise the "reality" from local newspapers, TV programs, books, textbooks, magazines, etc. and report their results to the class.

8. Exchange sets of "stereotype and myth" cards so that each group has a set of cards from the other groups.

9. Have a discussion in which students are encouraged to note what surprised them the most, what they already recognized as reality, etc.

10. Discuss stereotypes and myths which Africans might have regarding your country.

11. Handout 1-1 "Sierra Leone: Background Information" is designed as a reference with background information which might be useful during the unit. The teacher can decide whether to read the handout and use the information in class or to give the handout to students.

SIERRA LEONE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Land and Climate

Sierra Leone is located on the west coast of Africa less than 10o north of the equator. Guinea lies to the north and east and Liberia to the south. There is a coastline on the Atlantic Ocean of over 200 miles. The population is about 4 1/2 million and the capital city is Freetown with a population of over 700,000.

A low coastal plain reaches about 70 miles into the interior. The land gradually rises to form hills and then the mountains of the northeast. The highest peak, Mt. Bintimani, is about 6,000 feet. Breaking the coastal lowlands, the mountains of the Sierra Leone peninsula are 25 miles long and just northwestward from the mainland. The peninsula and land to the east and north form the largest natural harbor on the continent. Freetown is located at the northern tip of this peninsula. (See the maps in the handouts for lesson 13, page ///)

Much of the soil is laterite, red in color due to iron oxide, and is not very fertile. The staple food is rice, which is grown throughout the country. Farmers include both women and men each with their tasks to perform, as most of the labor is done by hand.

The climate is marked by a dry season from March until April and a rainy season from April to November. During the latter, rain comes daily, often in several different downpours. Along the coast the average rainfall reaches 185 to 190 inches per year. In the interior it falls off to about 100 inches a year in the northeast. Rainfall is so infrequent during the dry season that agriculture is impossible without irrigation. Contrary to myth, the temperature is not unbearably hot, although humidity is usually high. Along the coast the mercury climbs into the low 80°s F but may get ten degrees or more warmer in the interior at the end of the dry season. Coastal areas experience lows in the high 60°s or low 70°s but in the higher elevations of the interior the temperature may sink into the low 50°s or even the high 40°s. The harmattan winds from the interior of the continent blow in December and January and bring the lowest temperatures of the year.

People and Language

There are sixteen principal ethnic groups in Sierra Leone but two are dominant. The Mende and the Temne each comprise about 31 or 32 percent of the total population. Temne is the principal language spoken in northern and western Sierra Leone and Mende is dominant in the south and east.

The Krios (Creoles) make up only 2 percent of the population, about 70,000 altogether, but they permeate the professions and the upper levels of the civil service. The Krios have a complex ancestry comprising:

1. settlers of African ancestry from England who established Freetown in 1787;
2. later settlers, also of African ancestry, from Nova Scotia in Canada and Jamaica; and
3. liberated Africans from different parts of West Africa who were taken from illegal slave ships in the nineteenth century by seamen of the Royal Navy and brought to Freetown.

The vocabulary of the Krio language comes from various local African languages and English. The syntax is West African. Almost all Sierra Leoneans speak Krio, the lingua franca. English, however, is the official language and is used in the schools, government, and business. In general, the most widely used languages in Sierra Leone, each having their particular functions and geographical locations, are Krio, English, Mende, and Temne.

The population of Freetown is about 700,000. Next in size are Bo, Kenema, and Sefadu, each between 25,000 and 50,000. Most Sierra Leoneans live in small towns of less than 5,000 people. Even farmers, who make up 65 or 70 percent of the population, live in small towns, or villages in Sierra Leone, and walk to their farms from one to three or four miles away in the morning and return to their homes in the villages in the evening.

An Historical Sketch

Various ethnic groups arrived in what is now Sierra Leone beginning as early as the third century AD. Among the earlier peoples were the Temne, the Limba, and the Krim. Later, from the fourteenth century onward, came the Mande-speakers from the heartland of present-day Mali. They are now found from

Senegal to Liberia and eastward to Burkina Faso and Ghana. In Sierra Leone the Mande-speaking groups include the Mende, Kono, and Manding. These different peoples established agricultural and pastoral societies who traded with their neighbors. The main occupation was farming with rice the staple food. Long distance trade featured kola nuts and ivory going north and livestock, hides, and salt moving south into Sierra Leone.

Repatriated Africans from England established Freetown in 1787 as a settlement for the Sierra Leone company headed by Granville Sharp, William Wilberforce, and Henry Thornton, all noted abolitionists. They were joined by settlers from Nova Scotia and Jamaica, and liberated Africans, taken from illegal slave ships after the British government declared the slave trade illegal in 1807. These groups eventually merged, thus forming the Krios (see above).

Many Krios became traders from Senegal to Nigeria and also penetrated into the hinterland east of Freetown. By the end of the nineteenth century Krio traders, clergymen, and professional people had became influential all along the West African coast. Krios synthesized African and western cultural traits to create a distinctive, lively society.

British influence gradually increased in Freetown's hinterland during the 1800s and in 1896 they declared a protectorate (in effect, a colony) over the area which is Sierra Leone today. This imperialist venture did not go unchallenged as Africans rebelled in 1898, an event often called the Hut Tax War. In the six months of fighting hundreds of people were killed, but more Africans than British. The British victory confirmed their hegemony and the colonial interlude began.

The essentials of modern colonialism rested on the dependency established between the European power and its subject peoples. This dependency existed because the colonial power possessed the monopoly of force necessary to impose its will on technologically weaker peoples. The colonial power within this context attempted to govern in a manner conducive to the increase and spread of the market economy and its related institutions. The result was to promote the interests of the expatriate commercial firms and any financial advantages accruing to the local people were by-products, frequently cited as examples to demonstrate the benefits of colonial rule.

During the colonial period little economic development occurred in Sierra Leone or anywhere else in West Africa, for that matter. Colonial rule was based firmly on the premise that the colonial powers should exploit human and natural resources in their colonies, not on an attempt to improve living standards of the indigenous people. The Europeans also drew a strict color line above which Africans could not rise no matter how well qualified they were. The British in Sierra Leone reserved the top administrative, executive, and business positions for themselves. No Africans could advance into these hallowed areas. Whatever improvements were made--schools, health clinics, road--were paid for by Sierra Leoneans from taxes raised within the country. The British did not have the resources, personnel, or will to effect major changes.

After World War II ended in 1945 the British government began to make some effort to bring change to Sierra Leone in the economic and political spheres. By 1960, however, the British were retreating from empire throughout the continent with little to show for their developmental efforts.

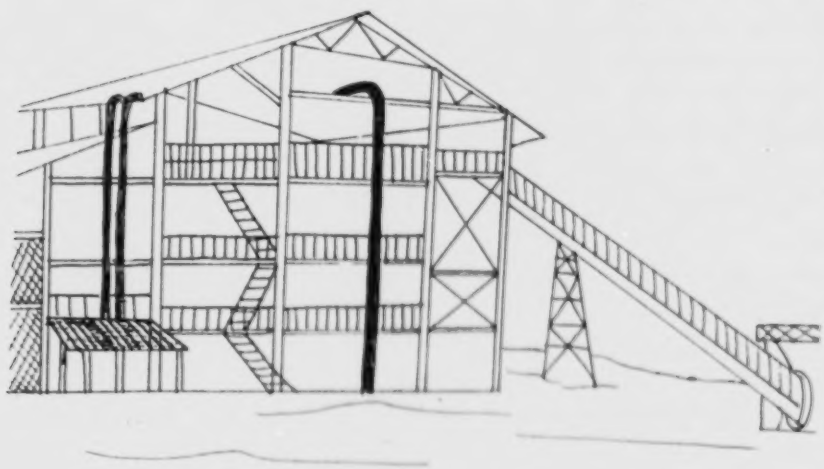
During the 1950s the Sierra Leone People's party made up largely of Mende people under Milton Margai, a medical doctor, led the movement for independence which came on April 27, 1961. After a disputed election in 1967 a year of military rule followed before Siaka Stevens, a trade union leader, and his All Peoples Congress came to power. Stevens eliminated political opposition, declared Sierra Leone a one-party state in 1978, and ruled in a dictatorial manner until 1985. The regime of Stevens and the All Peoples Congress was ruinous for the Sierra Leonean economy as mismanagement and corruption led to the desperate state of the economy in the 1990s. Living standards have fallen as inflation is rampant, unemployment has risen, and the education system and other social services are declining.

Steven's successor as president, Joseph Momoh, did not seem able to improve matters. In 1992 a military coup was led by Valentine Strasser, who is only in his late twenties. The military government has announced that it will lead the country to a democratic government under civilian control. Throughout Africa in the last several years democratic changes and more open economic systems have been emerging. One hopes that Sierra Leoneans will soon become a part of these momentous changes now spreading throughout the continent.

The Economy Today

As mentioned above, rice is grown by small farmers and is the main part of the diet. There is a division of labor by sexes for the various tasks of the agricultural cycle such as clearing the land, planting, cultivating, and harvesting. Women prepare different sauces made from vegetables, tomato paste, onions, seasonings, and some meat or fish to go over the rice. Today much rice is imported although until twenty years ago or so, Sierra Leoneans grew enough to feed themselves. Government policies and practices have long discriminated against small farmers and until farmers are provided more incentives--better farm-to-market roads, access to small, low interest loans, better prices for rice and other products--more and more people will leave the rural areas to flock to Freetown and other urban regions. Because jobs are difficult to find, most become unemployed or underemployed.

Diamonds and gold, mined in the south and east, are the sources for most foreign exchange. Iron ore also was important until the last decade when the largest mine closed. International prices for diamonds and gold have been low in the last ten years and consequently Sierra Leone's revenues have declined. Then, too, government officials and agencies do not always make the best use of available funds. Sierra Leoneans are quick to denounce corruption in their government which they see as a principal reason for the countryís depressed economy today.



A diamond mine in Sierra Leone.

2. THE MANDING NAME GAME

Introduction

This game involves names of the Manding people, who live not only in Sierra Leone but from Senegal southward to Liberia and east to Ghana.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Understand the special historic and social relationships traditionally associated with clan names.
- Begin to understand the workings of a Sierra Leonean and West African community.
- Become familiar with some common West African names.

Materials

1. "Teacher's Introduction" to the Manding name game.
2. Duplicate Handout 2-1, "Manding Clan Names," so that you can cut up the sheets and have enough individual clan name slips for each student.
3. Duplicate Handout 2-2, "Name Problems," enough times so that you can cut up the sheets of paper and have an individual problem for each student.

Procedures

1. Become familiar with the information contained in the teacher's introduction to the Manding name game, "The Manding."

2. Discuss highlights of "The Manding" with the students.

3. Let each student select a clan name, read the description, and become familiar with the information.

4. Then give each student a slip of paper with a problem to be solved by someone from one of the Manding occupation groups. The student must decide which Manding clan would be most able to help, find a classmate who is a member of that Manding clan, and ask that classmate to sign her/his own first name and Manding last name to the problem slip.

5. Lead a discussion on what students have learned about communities in Sierra Leone and the areas of West Africa where there are Manding people.

Answers to the Name Game

1. Keita is an appropriate answer for problem 5.
2. Kamara is the only appropriate response to problem 2 and is an acceptable answer for problem 5.
3. Kouyate is the only appropriate response to problem 6.
4. Sanu is the answer to problem 3 and is acceptable for problem 7.
5. Turay is an acceptable answer to problem 1.
6. Jabi is the best answer for problem 7 and a possible answer for problem 1.
7. Janneh is the answer for problem 4.

Teacher's Introduction

Personal names in Africa are much more than labels to identify an individual. As vitally important indicators of social benefits and practices, personal names are given with care to indicate the special nature of an individual. They may refer to the day of a person's birth, to special events associated with the birth, to a person's position within the family, or to religious beliefs.

Family names, also termed lineage or clan names, in Sierra Leone and West Africa are of equal or greater significance than personal names. The lineage places an individual within the larger framework of his family group, and provides to family members a common bond representing the group's historical experience within society. The Manding Name Game is built upon clan names and should help students understand the special historic and social relationships traditionally associated with clan names in the Manding-speaking areas of West Africa.

Manding is an umbrella term used to describe a number of West African ethnic groups who share a common culture, history, and related languages. In Sierra Leone the Manding are known as Mandingo when Sierra Leoneans speak English, although Malinke or Mandinka is also used. Other Manding people include the Bambara of Mali and the Dyula or Jula of Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso. Numbering over ten million, the Manding inhabit an area of West Africa more than 1,200 miles wide that includes all or parts of Sierra Leone, Mali, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, and Ghana.

Among the Manding people certain large family groups, or clans, were (and still are) associated with special occupations. Young men of these clans would typically learn the family trade as apprentices to relatives. For some, such as blacksmiths, leather-workers, and praise-singers, clan members would marry only members of other clans with the same occupation.

The Manding Name Game is played by matching particular problems to be solved with the clan name of a Manding clan which specializes in providing that service. You should remember, however, that these names included in the game are not the only names found among the Manding and there are also other names prominent in these same occupations. Each of the seven names provided in the game is a well-known Manding name--your students will have literally hundreds of thousands of African "brothers" and "sisters" with the same name. Remember, too, that these days the occupation lines among the Manding have grown increasingly fluid. Today you might find people in the clans who are teachers, doctors, or members of other professions. Similarly, members of any of these families might farm for a living, since agriculture is the predominant economic activity. But tradition is important too, and, if you have the good fortune to meet a Manding person with one of these names, he or she will likely tell you that many members of the clan still practice the traditional occupations.

The Manding name game may be used to give students a beginning experience in workings of an African community. You may, however, go further with it. A teacher could divide a class into neighborhoods based on the clan associations and engage in role-playing the community interactions. The game helps to give students an interdisciplinary introduction to Sierra Leone and West Africa. Information on the occupations followed in a particular society gives more than data about the jobs themselves. By playing this game, students learn something about the history, geography, economics, religion, and Manding culture in general.

MANDING CLAN NAMES

Keita. The name Keita (pronounced Kay-tah) is associated with rulers in Manding areas. The founder of the Mali Empire, Sundiata (Sun-ja-tah), was a Keita who traced this ancestry back to Bilal, a close associate of the Prophet Muhammad. Sundiata established a Keita dynasty that ruled over ancient Mali for approximately 300 years and included the famed Mansa Musa, a fourteenth-century monarch whose fabled pilgrimage to Mecca was discussed throughout the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa. In modern times, too, Keitas are often associated with government. The first president of the republic of Mali in the 1960s, for example, was Modibo Keita. Members of the Keita clan were often rulers--governors, town heads, or provincial officials--in areas of Manding-speaking population. Besides being responsible for general administration, for the collection of taxes, and for the enforcement of laws, such rulers often acted as judges.

Kamara. Kamaras are a blacksmith clan. Because of their skill in making hoes, a life-giving instrument in agricultural society, and swords, an article of war and death, Kamaras were often considered to have special powers. In some areas they carved sacred wooden figures or masks used in the honoring of ancestors. At times, they would be called upon to help solve disputes. In addition to working with iron, Kamaras were jewelers, specialists who fashioned gold and silver into magnificent jewelry worn proudly by women throughout much of West Africa.

A musician playing the Kora.

Kouyate. Kouyate (Ku-ya-tay) is the clan name of many famed praise-singers in Manding society. Sometimes called griots (gree-ohs), these bards were known for a variety of literary skills. Musicians who mastered the kora (a stringed musical instrument) or balafon (relative of the xylophone), the griots would sing poetic praises in honor of families and individuals on important occasions. Some griots were court historians who preserved and recited history from ancient times. Others acted as advisors to rulers, tutors to young noblemen, and even ambassadors between West African kingdoms.

Sanu. Sanu is the name typical of Manding trading clans who became well known as long-distance traders in the centuries before the colonial conquest of West Africa in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Small neighborhoods of traders were located in towns as far east as the present Ghana-Togo border and as far west as Dakar in Senegal. The major products traded varied over the years but included kola nuts, cloth, ivory, slaves, hides, and gold. These traders continue their activities to this day, dealing in everything from ballpoint pens to automobiles.

Turay (Toure). Turays are often known as morimen or diviners. As a specialist in divining the causes of events, a moriman would be asked to explain the reasons for something when its cause was not readily apparent. A Turay might be consulted, for example, to explain a sudden death or to create a charm to assist a student in taking a difficult exam. Morimen were (and still are) known as healers. They combine a knowledge of herbal medicines with magical charms to protect their clients. The Turays are famous, too, as a clan that produced two important West African historical figures. Samori Toure was a nineteenth century empire builder who stoutly defended the state he created against European invasions, but eventually succumbed to pressures from the French. Sekou Toure ruled the republic of Guinea from independence in 1958 to 1984.

Jabi. Jabi is a typical farming clan among the Manding. Traditionally the main economic activity among Manding people was agriculture, and families involved in other occupations might also till the soil. Because most Manding groups live in savannah grassland areas, their staple crops include millet, sorghum, rice, corn, and groundnuts (peanuts).

Janneh. Most Manding are Muslims, and Jannehs are often the teachers in the religious schools. Here boys and often girls beginning at the ages of five or six learn to recite and chant verses from the Qur'an (Koran), the Muslim holy book.

Because God revealed the content of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad in Arabic, that language is studied in the Qur'anic schools. The goal of each student is to be able to recite in Arabic from memory as much as possible of the Qur'an, which is about two-thirds the length of the Christian Bible.

Name Problems

1. Your last rice crop failed. Find someone who can help explain why.

2. You need a new hoe for weeding. Find someone who will make you one.

3. You live in northern Sierra Leone and you want to purchase some kola nuts which are grown in southern Sierra Leone. Find someone to help you.

4. Your son is five years old and you want him to learn the Qurían (Koran). Find a teacher for him.

5. You are disputing the use of farm land with a neighbor. Find someone to help you settle the dispute.

6. You have a five-day-old daughter and are planning a naming ceremony for her. Find someone to come and sing praises of your family.

7. You are provisioning your storehouse for the long dry season. Find someone who will sell you some grain.

3. COMMON NAMES IN SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

Names are part of our self-awareness. In Sierra Leone last names may indicate your ethnic group. First names may indicate whether you are a Muslim or a Christian.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn some common Sierra Leonean names.
- Identify with one first name and one last name.

Materials

Handout 3-1, "Vital Information about My Life in Sierra Leone"
Handout 3-2, "Common Names in Sierra Leone"
File folders
Scissors, marking pens, paper, pins

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 3-1, "Vital Information About My Life in Sierra Leone." Have students begin to fill it out. As the study of Sierra Leone progresses students will be able to complete the questions.

2. Distribute Handout 3-2, "Common Names in Sierra Leone."

3. Distribute a file folder to each student to enable everyone to keep her/his work and handouts organized.

4. Go over the names listed with everyone pronouncing them out loud. (Pronounce them phonetically and do not worry whether or not you are getting them absolutely correct. Few people will, since African languages are tonal and most people have a difficult time getting the tones correct without extended instruction. If a name begins with a double consonant as in "Kpakiwa," just ignore the first consonant sound, but again, do not worry about getting everything perfect as it takes a great deal of practice and time to get these sounds right.)

5. Divide the class into groups of four or five and let each student select a first and last name.

6. Let each student then introduce herself/himself to everyone else in the group.

7. Let each make a name tag from paper the teacher distributes and attach her/his name tag to her/his clothing. Encourage the students to use their Sierra Leonean names throughout the study of Sierra Leone.

8. Students will write their Sierra Leonean names on their papers and all their work in the study of Sierra Leone.

Vital Information About My Life in Sierra Leone

1. Name: _____

2. Sierra Leonean Name: _____

3. Town: _____

4. My Family Members: _____

_____

5. My Favorite Food: _____

6. My School and Favorite Subject: _____

_____

7. My Mother's Occupation: _____

8. My Father's Occupation: _____

9. Agricultural products grown in my part of Sierra Leone: _____

_____

10. Minerals mined (if any) in my part of the country: _____

_____

COMMON NAMES IN SIERRA LEONE

First names for females	First names for males
1. Fatmata	1. Abu or Abu-Bakr
2. Hawa	2. Bockari
3. Kadiatu	3. Mohamed
4. Fatu	4. Amadu
5. Yebu	5. Momodu
6. Sophiatu	6. Mustapha
7. Jennaba	7. Foday
8. Fanta	8. Ali
9. Yeriba	9. Santigi
10. Mabinta	10. Sorie
11. Mariama	11. Brima
12. Mbalu	12. Musa
13. Titi	13. Sahr
14. Saffi	14. Abdullah, Abdul or Abdullai
15. Neneh	15. Sulaiman
16. Mary	16. John
17. Gladys	17. Thomas
18. Margaret	18. Stephen
19. Sarah	19. Paul
20. Jane	20. James

Note: Hawa is the Arabic equivalent of Eve. Mariama is an Arabic version of Mary. Musa is the Arabic for Moses. Sulaiman is the Arabic for Solomon. Abdullah/Abdul/Abdullai are all forms of the same name. The usual translation for this name from the Arabic is "servant of God," although slave of God is more accurate. These names are common in Sierra Leone because Arabic names are found wherever Islam is popular and over half the people in Sierra Leone are Muslim.

Abu, Abu-Bakr, and Bockari are all forms of the same name.

Mohamed (or Muhammad, which is the most accurate transliteration from the Arabic) is the most common name for males in the world as nearly all Muslim males have the name. Amadu and Momodu are variations of Mohamed.
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Surnames (last names)

1. Turay
2. Kamara
3. Koroma
4. Kanu
5. Conteh
6. Sesay
7. Kabba
8. Massaquoi
9. Tarawali
10. Koulabali
11. Kouyate
12. Daramy
13. Davies
14. Gbanya
15. Kpakiwa
16. Mansaray
17. Cole
18. Nicol
19. Rogers-Wright
20. Fyle
21. Fofanah
22. Sheriff
23. Lahai
24. Jah
25. Karimu

IBRAHIM'S PROBLEM

Part 1: Ibrahim Finishes the Term at the Grammar School

Introduction

Too often the study of other cultures is limited to factual information, which is absolutely necessary to acquire, but which by itself is insufficient. This reading, which is in three parts, and accompanying activities concern a few days in the life of a Sierra Leonean teenager in the 1990s. The reader gains an understanding of some important Sierra Leonean customs, ideas, and practices in general and a more "up close and personal" look at one high school student. More important, the reader will see the world more as a Sierra Leonean sees it.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Sierra Leonean family life.
- Learn about the Sierra Leonean climate, geography, and food.
- Learn about the Sierra Leonean education traditions--Indigenous, Muslim, and Western.
- Learn about Islam and its practice in Sierra Leone.
- Discuss and analyze the cognitive and affective knowledge which students have acquired.

Materials

Handout 4-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 1: Ibrahim Finishes the Term at the Grammar School"
Paper, pen

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 4-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 1: Ibrahim Finishes the Term at the Grammar School."

2. Divide the class into groups of four or five.

3. Let each group read the handout either individually within each group or cooperatively.

4. Have each group compile a list of important and/or interesting facts, customs, ideas, etc. which the members of the group consider significant.

5. Imagine that you are visiting Ibrahim. Make a list of the five most interesting things you have noticed about Ibrahim's life that you would include in a letter home.

6. Make a list of questions you would like to ask Ibrahim to find out more about his life.

7. Let the chair of each group report to the class the findings and observations of his/her group, followed by a general discussion led by you, the chairs of the groups, by a committee you appoint, or the groups themselves choose.

8. Imagine you are visiting Ibrahim. Write a letter home describing the experience. Research and find the answer to one of the questions you or your classmates asked.

IBRAHIM'S PROBLEM

PART 1: Ibrahim Finishes the Term at the Grammar School

In Sierra Leone boys and girls often attend elementary and high school in towns far from their home. Sometimes student live in dormitories on the school compound as early as seventh or eighth grade, but often they live with relatives. Ibrahim Jah's hometown is Kenema, a town of 25,000 which is also the capital of the Eastern Province, but he attends the Grammar School, a secondary (senior high) school in Freetown, the capital city of the country. He lives with his Uncle Abu and Aunt Hawa about two miles away from the school. Ibrahim's uncle, who is one of his father's brothers, works as a clerk in the main post office in downtown Freetown and his aunt is employed as a secretary in the office of the United Nations Development Commission.

As there are five children in the house, Ibrahim shares a bedroom with two of his cousins, Musa and Momodu. It is the custom for Ibrahim to refer to his cousins as "brothers" and "sisters." Musa and Momodu have a double bed on which to sleep and Ibrahim has a cot in the small room. The only other furniture in the bedroom is a table where they gather at night to do their lessons for the next day. Ibrahim keeps his clothes and personal belongings in two cardboard suitcases stacked in one corner of the room. Musa and Momodu do the same. The three youths' bedroom is off the verandah which runs along the front of the house.

There are three other bedrooms, all of which are needed as twelve people live here. Uncle Abu and Aunt Hawa's three daughters are Fatmata, Isata, and Nyama. The oldest, Fatmata, who is nineteen years old, does much of the cooking and, in general, looks after the house. Isata and Nyama attend St. Joseph's Primary School. ("Primary" is used for schools with grades, called "standards," 1-7. Forms 1-5 make-up the senior high, or "secondary" school years.)

Also living in the house are Grandmother Mariama, Uncle Abu's mother, two of Aunt Hawa's nieces, Bintu and Mabinta, and another girl, Jennaba, about ten years old, who is not related to anyone in the house. Jennaba is the daughter of a good friend of Aunt Hawa's who will look after her for some years before she returns to her own family to live. Such arrangements are commonplace in Sierra

Leone and throughout all of West Africa, for that mater. Sierra Leoneans believe that living with another family helps to make you a better person.

The house has electricity, that is, it does when power is on in Freetown. Even though it is a city of about 700,000 people and the nation's capital, it is often without lights for hours (sometimes even days) at a time. Because of the uncertain electricity the refrigerator in the dining room is virtually worthless.

Cooking is done outside the back door in a small room built for the purpose. Wood is burned to make the fire over which Fatmata, Grandmother Mariama, or Aunt Hawa cook. For breakfast they often prepare oatmeal, called porridge, which is served with long loaves of bread, known as "French bread," and hot tea, drunk with several cubes of sugar and considerable milk. The main meal comes in the evening and consists of a sauce served over rice, the staple food. Sauces vary but always they go over the rice. Ibrahim's favorite sauce is made from chopped up sweet potato leaves, onions, hot peppers, and fish cooked in palm oil. He often thinks he could eat that sauce and rice at least three or four times a week. At school, if he has the money during their midmorning break, he buys a banana, an orange, or perhaps a small cake to eat.

The house also has running water. Again, as with the electricity, there is water when the water supply is on in their part of the city. In the past five or six years this too has become unpredictable. At times the house is without running water for two or three consecutive days. When that occurs, almost everyone has to take turns drawing water from a nearby well. During the rainy season, from April to November, when it usually rains up to 200 inches in Freetown, Aunt Hawa and the girls put buckets out to catch the rain water. Of course that cannot be done during the remaining months of the year because it seldom, if ever, rains then.

On this day in mid-December it is bright and almost cloudless. As always, the humidity is high but the temperature is moderate. It got down to 70°F. last night and it will rise into the lower 80°s by midafternoon, normal for the dry season. The eight-foot tall poinsettia bush just outside the bedroom window is a profusion of bright red and the vegetation is still green since the rainy season has just ended. Later, by March, grass will turn brown and many bushes and plants will lose their leaves.

Ibrahim is excited because he is going to take ("to sit for" as Ibrahim thinks of it) his last two examinations of the term today. Then there will be two more terms left in the school year, which runs from September to July. At 8:00 a.m. he has his West African history exam and at 10:00 a.m. there is English language. He is in form 4, the fourth year of a five-year secondary school program. This year and next he is studying six subjects--math, biology, geography, and West African government, plus history and English, the exams he has today. At the end of his form 5 year Ibrahim will sit for exams in each of these subjects and the results will determine whether or not he can continue on to form 6, a two-year course of study before a student enrolls at the university level. These exams are administered by the West African Examinations Council which gives the same exams in Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Ghana, and Nigeria.

That is, Ibrahim would sit for the exams at the end of the next year if he is still in school by then. Like so many school children in Sierra Leone, where an already poor country is in the grip of a prolonged economic downturn, money for school fees is becoming harder and harder to obtain. The fees for each term are 4,000 leones, about $50. With prices skyrocketing upward in a terrible rate of inflation, and salaries scarcely rising at all, Ibrahim has to visit many relatives before each term of school begins to beg them for money to pay his fees in order for him to remain in school.

The night before Ibrahim had studied with a school friend, Mustapha, for his history exam. Ibrahim considers both of his cousins whose room he shares to be lackluster students and thus rarely studies with them, and, besides, they are not in the same form. He is certain that for the history exam he can discuss aspects of the early history of Islam in West Africa and highlights of early state development in Ghana, Mali, Songhay, the Hausa states, and Kanem-Borno, all important topics in their study for the term. The exam will contain three or four essay questions to discuss at length and he feels prepared. The English exam will consist of writing an essay on a set subject which the teacher, Mrs. Kamara, will put on the board. There will also be a grammar section which Ibrahim is quite good at, so there are few worries for this part of the exam.

Dressed in the Grammar School uniform of khaki shorts and white shirt Ibrahim and Mustapha walk the two miles from the house to the Grammar School compound. Every school has distinctive uniforms for its students to wear. In

earlier days, Ibrahim knew, it was common for students to take a bus to school but now few could afford to do that. The closer they get to the compound, the more students there are. The Grammar School is for males only, although there are schools for females and some which are coed. As the two friends get within a few blocks of the school the houses along the way become larger and the yards bigger. At times, off to the left, the two get a glimpse of the Atlantic Ocean. Mango, orange, and grapefruit trees line the street.

The Grammar School is the oldest secondary school in all of Africa, dating from 1845 when the Church Missionary Society, and Anglican church group from Britain, started it. Just three years later the Church Missionary Society founded a smaller school for females, the Annie Walsh School. Freetown had long led West Africa in the development of Western-style education, but, as in so many areas, now lags behind other countries in the region.

The two exams go about as Ibrahim expects they would. There are no surprises and he thinks that he has done well on both.

5. EDUCATION IN SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

All people devise ways to socialize their children into the community. The subject mater and the methods of what is taught vary but the goal is the same--to ensure that children and youths develop into responsible members of their societies. In Sierra Leone there are three educational traditions--Indigenous, Muslim, and Western.

Objectives

Students will be able to

- Learn about Sierra Leone's three educational traditions--Indigenous, Muslim, and Western.
- Think critically about education issues in both Sierra Leone and your country.

Materials

Handout 4-1, "Ibrahim's Problem Part, 1: Ibrahim Finishes the Term at the Grammar School" .
Handout 5-1, "Education in Sierra Leone"

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 4-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 1: Ibrahim Finishes the Term at the Grammar School," and Handout 5-1, "Education in Sierra Leone."

2. Divide the class into groups of four or five.

3. Let each group read the handouts either individually within each group or cooperatively.

4. Have the members of each group discuss among themselves how the three educational traditions in Sierra Leone meet the needs of Sierra Leonean society. Have each group select someone to be the recorder who will make a list of the main points.

5. Tell each group to discuss among themselves how the practices in the Western type schools in Sierra Leone are similar and how they are different from practices with which the students are familiar. Let the recorder keep an account of the highlights of the discussion.

6. Have each group report to the class the important aspects of their conclusions.

7. Assign a composition of one paragraph on the topic, "What I Prefer about Sierra Leonean Educational Practices as

Compared to My Own" or "Ideas from Sierra Leonean Education From Which We Can Learn." The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to think in a meaningful cross-cultural manner. Too often, we compare some West African institution and our own institution, and always the conclusion is that the West African methods and practices are wrong and everything about our way of doing things is preferable. This activity precludes such ethnocentric thinking.

8. Divide the class into groups and have students read each other's compositions. Have each group make a chart showing what points they agree on and on what points they disagree.

EDUCATION IN SIERRA LEONE

There are two educational traditions which long predate Western-style education. One of these is the indigenous and the other is the Islamic.

The indigenous African education is a practical one which integrates the individual into society from birth to death. It is also comprehensive as it instills moral values, teaches vocational skills, and inculcates codes of behavior. Education is a continuous exercise and all society is the teacher. Some African people, including many in Sierra Leone, have developed schools for the purpose of transferring knowledge and behavior from one generation to the next. One example is the Poro Society for men found in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, and Guinea. The Bundu Society for women is found in much of the same area. In former times, adolescent boys and girls were removed from their families, sent to the association schools in a nearby forest area for up to three or four years, and then returned home to their families. Then the adolescents were considered to be adults, having learned what is necessary for them to know in order to be contributing members of society. Now, however, the length of the association schools is much reduced, perhaps for a few weeks time during the vacation period of the Western-type schools.

The other educational tradition which predates the Western one is the Islamic. Islam first appeared in West Africa in the eighth century A.D. The principal goal of Muslim established schools is for students to learn to read and write Arabic, the language of worship in Islam, and to memorize the Qur'an (Koran), which is about two-thirds the length of the Christian Bible. Selected students then go on to advanced stages of Islamic education. Often a boy or girl will attend both Western and Muslim schools. The child attends Qur'anic school at the house of the Imam, the teacher, early in the morning from about 6:00 am to 7:30 am. Then s/he goes to the Western school. The student then returns to the Imam's house for another session from about 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the afternoon. As you can see, this full schedule would make for a very exhausting day.

In the 1780s people of African ancestry came to settle Freetown from Britain and they immediately set up schools modeled after the British system. To this

day schools in Sierra Leone (and in other African countries where the British were the colonial power) are organized similar to the British model. In the process of shaping the schools to meet the needs of West Africans, however, the system has been modified to suit local conditions, both in the content of the curriculum and in the methods by which the teachers conduct their classrooms.

Discipline is quite strict in a West African classroom. If a student misbehaves s/he may be paddled, or "flogged," to use the local word. Sometimes a boy who has acted up will have to go outside and work at cleaning up the yard. In Third World countries such as Sierra Leone there are never enough places in a school for all of the boys and girls who are of school age. Therefore, if a student misbehaves too many times, s/he will be expelled, or "driven" in the local usage, and replaced by a person who has been on the waiting list.

There are usually from thirty to forty (or more) students in a classroom. The teacher moves from room to room, not the students. When the teacher enters the classroom all the students stand and greet the teacher in unison, "Good morning, sir!" or if it is a woman, "Good morning, ma!" The teacher then responds, "Good morning, class. Sit down!" Every time a student wants to say something, s/he must first get recognition from the teacher and then stand before beginning to talk. The student must always refer to the male teacher as "sir" and the female teacher as "ma."

Many times the teacher will put important information on the blackboard and then it is the responsibility of the student to write these notes in his/her notebook, called an "exercise book." This material is always memorized. Often there are not enough textbooks for every student in the class; therefore, this method helps to get important information to everyone in the class. In general, students are eager to learn and work hard in all of their subjects. The atmosphere in the classroom also encourages learning because unruly students are "driven," and not permitted to remain in school.

The language of instruction in Sierra Leonean schools is English. That is, the teacher and the students speak to each other in English, all writing is done in English, and books are in English. This is so even though the great majority of the people in the country do not speak English in their homes. Many boys and girls

first begin to learn English when they start to school. In these first few years the language of instruction is one of the local Sierra Leonean languages, perhaps Krio, Mende, or Temne. But after several years the only language used in the classroom will be English. As you can see, the ability to learn a foreign language, in this case English, is very important in determining how well each student will do in school. Learning English so that you can speak it as well as a native-speaker is absolutely essential if a student is to do good work in school.

Most secondary schools have a number of clubs--debate, current affairs, or drama, for example. Then there are clubs which feature one of the subjects such as math (called "maths") or the French club.

There are also a number of sports. By far the most popular is soccer (called "football"). Only males play it. Soccer is by far the most popular sport in all of Africa, and in most of the world, for that matter. Interscholastic soccer matches are always highlights of the school year. Other important sports are track and field, volleyball, tennis, and table tennis (ping-pong). In all of these sports girls form their own teams and compete against each other just as the boys do. Basketball is not played very much in Sierra Leone although it does exist. Baseball and American football are unknown.

In societies throughout the world at the end of the twentieth century in order "to get ahead" it is necessary to obtain an education. In Third World countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America it is perhaps even more important as a means of improving people's lives than it is in Europe and North America. Where most people are poor, as in Sierra Leone, graduating from secondary (high) school is one of the few avenues open to prepare young people to get a job which will enable them to become a member of the middle class. Even better, of course, is to earn a college degree which permits the graduates to enter one of the professions.

6. IBRAHIM'S PROBLEM

Part 2: Ibrahim Goes to the Mosque and Visits Downtown Freetown

Introduction

Ibrahim's daily routine is similar to the activities of young people in countries throughout the world. People engage in religious practices and participate in market institutions in all cultures. Here Ibrahim prays in a mosque and visits a West African outdoor market.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Islam and its practices.
- Learn about Sierra Leonean markets.
- Learn about social and recreational activities.

Materials

Handout 6-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 2: Ibrahim Goes to the Mosque and Visits Downtown Freetown"
Paper, pen

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 6-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 2: Ibrahim Goes to the Mosque and Visits Downtown Freetown.

2. Divide the class into groups of four or five.

3. Have each group read the handout either individually within each group or cooperatively.

4. Have each group compile a list of important and/or interesting facts, customs, ideas, events, etc. which the members of the group consider significant.

5. The chair of each group then reports to the class the findings and observations of his/her group, followed by a general discussion led by you, the chairs of the groups, or by a committee you appoint or the groups themselves choose.

IBRAHIM'S PROBLEM

Part 2: Ibrahim Goes to the Mosque and Visits Downtown Freetown

After arriving home from school Grandmother Mariama tells Ibrahim that his Aunt Hawa wants him to take a message from her to Uncle Abu in downtown Freetown.

Before going downtown, however, Ibrahim, wearing a long flowing white gown, joins other Muslims at the nearby mosque for the Friday communal prayers. Although Muslims pray five times a day, these prayers can be performed anywhere. It is only on Friday that Muslims must congregate in a mosque for prayers and a sermon by the imam. Over half of the Sierra Leonean population are Muslims.

Before entering the mosque Ibrahim performs the required ablutions outside. This is a hygienic and spiritual cleansing using water. Inside the mosque the worshippers arrange themselves in straight rows to offer the prescribed prayers to God. Their movements involve kneeling and prostrating themselves before God by touching their heads to the floor. The prayers are always said in Arabic, as is required for all of the almost one billion Muslims throughout the world. The sermon, however, is always in the local language used by the people. In this mosque the imam gives the sermon in Mende. The service is completed in about forty minutes. Ibrahim then returns home and changes into a pair of khaki shorts, a T-shirt, and sneakers for his trip downtown.

To get to the main post office where his uncle works he rides one of the Freetown minibuses. In a space where there are seats for five people, ten are crammed, the usual condition for riding on any public transportation in the city. Near the post office he gets down among crowds of people and traders peddling candy, cakes, cigarettes, pencils, pens, the Daily Mail newspaper, and magazines such as West Africa, New African, Time, and Newsweek. Siaka Stevens Street, which throngs with people nearly all day, six days a week, is the thoroughfare Ibrahim deftly maneuvers his way through to reach the main entrance to the post office.

He walks down the stairs to the large lobby, sees his uncle behind one of the windows, and delivers the note which his aunt had written. First, of course, he goes through a long set of greetings with his uncle and coworkers. Sierra

Leoneans put great emphasis on such formalities and consider their neglect to be unacceptable rudeness.

Downtown Freetown.

After saying goodbye to Uncle Abu, Ibrahim leaves the post office and walks the short distance along some of the busiest streets in Freetown to the Victoria Street market which lies on the north end of the Victoria Park. The latter is an oasis of green in downtown Freetown, containing benches, flower gardens, and shrubbery of various kinds. Nowadays, however, it is usually locked, a shame Ibrahim thinks, as there is no other place in the shopping area of the city to sit and relax. Ibrahim knows that vandalism was the principal reason given for the park's locked gates but he wishes that at least occasionally the place might be opened throughout the year.

Ibrahim notices that the crowds of people in the streets of Freetown look less well dressed than when he first came to the city four years ago. It is, he surmises, a sign of the dismal economic times into which Sierra Leone has fallen. Low world market prices for the chief export, diamonds, means less revenue for the national treasury. Another major problem is that many Sierra Leonean political officials often siphon tax money and other revenues into their own bank

accounts, as corruption has become a national problem which everyone from all sections of society constantly denounces but for which no one seems to have the solution.

A Market scene in Freetown.

The sellers in Victoria Street market, many of whom are women, all have their own stalls to hawk their wares. In one section everyone offers cloth for sale, much of it tie-dyed in Sierra Leone, an art form at which Sierra Leonean women excel. Then there is a section of jewelry, one for shoes, and another for West African art, mostly wood carvings and sculptures.

Ibrahim heads for the area where bread is featured. Here he buys four of the long, thin loaves and then proceeds to a booth to purchase some locally made

A market scene in Freetown.

soap to wash clothes. The prices on these items which he buys are fixed, but for most of the merchandise the seller does not expect the potential customer to pay the first asking price. That is made only to start the bargaining. The customer replies that s/he is going to offer about a third of the asking price. What follows is a bargaining process which finally results, usually, in a mutually agreeable price, perhaps at about two-thirds of the original asking price, and the item is sold. It is all part of the social interaction of shopping and, of course, is accepted as the natural and completely normal way of doing business. There are also, one might note, larger shops, department stores, and supermarkets scattered throughout the business district where shopping conforms quite closely to the same practices in the west--Europe and North America.

A Supermarket in Freetown.

Ibrahim sees some friends and stops to chat. Martha and Kadiatu attend school at the Freetown Secondary School for Girls and they also sat for their exams this week. Martha is a friend from his hometown, Kenema, but Kadiatu has always lived in Freetown. Both the girls still wear their school uniforms, a light blue jumper with a white blouse.

"Kusha," Ibrahim greets the two.

"Kusha. Ow di bohdi," respond the girls.

"Mi bohdi fehn, tank God," replies Ibrahim.

The three converse in Sierra Leonean Krio, the lingua franca of the country. It is an interesting language as the vocabulary comes from English, Mende, and Temne. The latter two are important Sierra Leonean languages, as these are the two largest ethnic groups in the country. The grammar of Krio, however, is West African.

Krio is spoken in Sierra Leone on the streets and in normal social interaction. The language of instruction in schools, in businesses, and in government offices, however, is English. This is because the British were the European colonial power in Sierra Leone from the late 1890s until 1961 when the country regained independence. British influence had been present on the West African coast considerably earlier, however, as repatriated people of African ancestry from Britain settled Freetown beginning in 1787.

After returning home Ibrahim puts on his sneakers, sports shorts, and a T-shirt with a picture of the peninsula mountains on it (the very mountains which are in view almost everyplace one looks in Freetown). Then he hurries to the field where many of his friends are gathering to play soccer, which West Africans call football in English. It is by far the most important sport in Sierra Leone and all of Africa. Ibrahim, swift and tireless, is a striker and in the course of the practice match scores two goals.

Back home Grandmother Mariama, Fatmata, and the girls have prepared a meal of chopped up cassava leaves, onions, spices; and hot peppers cooked in palm oil with chicken added, all of which go over the ever-present rice. Ibrahim, Musa, and Momodu put rice and sauce on their own plates, take a spoon, and go into their bedroom to eat. Only rarely does everyone sit at the large table in the dining room to eat together. When the three youths have finished eating, they take their plates to the detached kitchen in the back yard, rinse them out, put them in a large basin, thank Grandmother Mariama and Fatmata for the delicious food, and return to the front of the house to sit and chat on the verandah.

7. ISLAM IN AFRICA

Introduction

Berber traders brought Islam to West Africa over a thousand years ago. Today a number of countries in this part of the continent have Muslim populations which make up 85 or 90 percent of the total. As a large majority of the people in North Africa are Muslim and substantial numbers of people in parts of East Africa are too, the African continent comprises a major proportion of the worldwide Muslim population of almost one billion people.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Islam and its practices.
- Consider aspects of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

Materials

Handout 7-1, "Islam in Africa"
Reference books
Paper, pen

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 7-1, "Islam in Africa."

2. Divide the class into groups of four or five.

3. Have each group read the handout either individually within each group or cooperatively.

4. Have each group make a list of important and/or interesting facts, customs, ideas, events, etc. which the members of the group consider significant.

5. Have each group gather additional information about Islam and Muslims from encyclopedias or any other available resources. Particularly consider asking Muslims themselves, if there are any in your community.

6. After the research, have the chair of each group report to the class the conclusions of his/her group, followed by a general discussion led by you, the chairs of the groups, or by a committee you appoint or the groups themselves choose.

7. Have each group list and/or discuss the Five Pillars of Islam among themselves. Tell them to compile additional information on the Five Pillars by consulting references, books, or local Muslims. Have each group discuss and/or list features of Jewish and/or Christian doctrine and practice which are similar to a particular pillar.

8. Lead a class discussion on important aspects of Islam and Muslim history as found in the handout (and which have not been emphasized in previous activities). Or, alternatively, do this in the groups and let each group report its conclusions to the class.

ISLAM IN AFRICA

Islam is not confined to the Middle East. It extends eastward as far as China, the Philippines, and southeast Asia, where the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia, is found. There are also tens of millions of Muslims in India and the central Asian republics which are part of the former Soviet Union.

To the west Islam reaches across North Africa from Egypt to Morocco and southward into West Africa and East Africa. Of the approximately 600 million people on the African continent about 275 million are Muslim, a significant percentage of them in Nigeria which has 65 million and Egypt with its 50 million. The North African countries of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt have had an overwhelmingly Muslim population for the last thousand years. Islam has made huge advances in sub-Saharan Africa during this century and today more than half of the total population is Muslim in Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Sudan, and Somalia. There are also significant Muslim minorities in a number of other countries.

The three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, are often referred to as the Abrahamic faiths, as they can all be traced to the prophet Abraham. Muslims believe that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, along with many of the other figures of the Jewish and Christian holy writings, are God's prophets. For Muslims, however, Muhammad is the Seal of the Prophets, the last and the greatest. He is not considered divine but a mortal called by God to deliver his revelations to humankind in the Qur'an (Koran). Islam, submission to the will of God, provides a way of life that provides for all possible relationships of person-to-person and each person with his/her society from birth to death. Islam brings together perhaps 900 million people from throughout the world into a fellowship built upon faith in the one God.

The life of the Prophet Muhammad is important because Muslims should live their lives, as much as possible, in imitation of the Prophet's life. He was born in about 570 A.D. into an urban environment, the city of Mecca, an important commercial and political center near the west coast of Arabia. One of the myths many people have about Islam is that it originated among desert bedouins.

Left an orphan, Muhammad was reared by an uncle. He became a trader and probably traveled as far north as the Mediterranean in the pursuit of his occupation. While still in his twenties he married a wealthy widow, Khadija. This enabled him to stop trading and to have the time necessary to meditate, which he did in the barren hills outside Mecca. It was here that he began to receive revelations from God through the archangel Gabriel, which continued over a period of some years in both Mecca and Medina. Later compiled together, these revelations comprise the Qur'an, the Muslim holy book.

Muhammad began to preach the idea of the one God in Mecca but was persecuted by the authorities. In 622 A.D. Muhammad and his few converts to the new faith moved to Medina about 200 miles north where Muhammad became both the religious and political leader. From being a small despised minority in Mecca to the Prophet's becoming the head of the religious and political community in Medina was such an important change that this move to Medina, called the hijra, marks the beginning of the Muslim era. In the Muslim calendar 622 A.D. is 1 AH, the year of the hijra.

Armed conflict between the Muslims of Medina and the Meccans ended with a Medinan victory and the Prophet entered Mecca in triumph, thus making the first hajj, or journey to Mecca. He made the Ka'ba, the cube-shaped building, called the house of God, where rests a black stone, the focus of worship. It is to this point that all Muslims face when saying their daily prayers to God. The archangel Gabriel gave Abraham this black stone and thus it is a symbol of God's concern for Muslims.

Muhammad died in 632 A.D. after which the Arabs burst out of their peninsula under the first khalifas, or caliphs, the religious and political successors to the Prophet. Within a century the Arabs had established a tremendous empire from Morocco and Spain in the west to India in the east. At a time when Europe was a backwater, Muslims developed a brilliant civilization which featured advances in the arts, sciences, government, and a prosperous economy for centuries in this huge region.

Muslims believe that God is all-powerful, good, and loves human beings. Only God, the Creator, is permanent; everything else passes away. God gave human beings a moral responsibility for themselves and for their fellow humans. The

religious person is one who is grateful to God, worships him, asks for forgiveness of sins, and offers prayers frequently. Such a person will receive the goodness and power of God. This human dependence upon God constitutes Islam, which means surrender to God.

Islamic law consists of the Qur'an, the hadith, which is the acts and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, and the practices of early Muslims. No matter where Muslims live, the Qur'an is always studied and prayers are said in Arabic, the language of God, as it was the language in which God delivered his revelations to Muhammad. The Qur'an maintains that there will be a last judgment and those who are worthy will spend eternity in heaven, and the remainder in hell. To ensure heaven on judgment day, Muslims follow the Five Pillars:

1. The shahada, the declaration of faith, which states that there is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet. Allah is the Arabic word for God, but it should always be translated into the English word--God--as to keep it in Arabic implies that one is referring to two deities--God and Allah--and the intention of Muslims is to insist on the oneness of God;

2. Salat, or prayers, said five times a day facing Mecca;

3. Ramadan observance, which is to fast from dawn to sunset during the twenty-eight days of the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, called Ramadan. No food may be eaten nor may liquids, including water, be drunk during daylight hours. The purpose is to thank God for the gift of the Qur'an and to improve oneself spiritually during the month;

4. The hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca Muslims should make once in a lifetime if possible, after which one is known as al-hajj (male) or al-hajja (female); and

5. Zakat, the giving of alms to the poor and the needy, but even more, it is an obligation to share one's material wealth with those less fortunate than oneself.

An Arab army carried Islam into Africa in 639 A.D. by invading Egypt. By that time Christianity had gained a dominant position through most of North Africa, particularly in the urban areas. It took several hundred years before the majority of the population became Muslim. In fact, there are Christian minorities throughout North Africa today with from 10-13 percent of Egypt's population being Christian, most of whom belong to the Coptic church.
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Berber traders from North Africa brought Islam across the Sahara to West Africa beginning in the eighth century. In West Africa local traders, some rulers, and their courts became Muslims. Islam spread mostly by peaceful means. Large and powerful West African states such as Ghana, Mali and, Songhay contained

numerous Muslims. Until this century, however, most people remained faithful to the African traditional religion.

The attractions of Islam in West Africa were several. It brought literacy in Arabic. By the fifteenth century many West African languages were being written using the Arabic alphabet. Another attraction of Islam was that it was associated with economic prosperity, mainly the trade across the Sahara and within West Africa. Through Islam, West Africa came into contact with the wider Islamic world which was the most "advanced" in the three-continent area of Europe, Africa, and Asia from the eighth to the seventeenth centuries. Then, too, the religion itself was impressive with its prayers and festivals. Important among the latter is the celebration of the New Year which includes fasting and prayers to assure prosperity in the coming year. The Prophet's birthday is a public holiday in Muslim countries and involves recitation of texts from the Qur'an, parades, and parties. After the month of fasting during Ramadan (one of the five pillars) there is a major celebration at the end, called `id al-fitr in Arabic.

Often accompanying traders, Muslim-learned men established Qur'anic schools in which the students memorized the Qur'an, about two-thirds the length of the Christian Bible. For more on present day Muslim education, see Handout 5-1, "Education in Sierra Leone." Muslim mystics (those who seek to establish a direct, emotional relationship with God) in the tariqas, or brotherhoods, helped to shape the practice of Islam into a form in which ordinary people could participate more fully. Both the learned men and the mystics were very important in the spread of Islam in West Africa.

Islam had existed in West Africa for almost a thousand years before the European conquest of the African continent at the end of the 1800s. But it was during the seventy years of European colonial rule which followed that Muslims made their most rapid advances. In fact the number of Muslims has doubled since 1900 to the current total of about 275 million. Today Muslims make up an ever-growing, energetic proportion of the African population and seem destined to becoming an even more vital part of African societies in the future.
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8. THE ARABIC ALPHABET

Introduction

As a Semitic language, Arabic bears many similarities to Hebrew. Some of the letters of the two languages resemble each other. By helping students begin to realize that the letters in all scripts, no matter how different in appearance they may be, represent sounds, students begin to demystify what at first glance seem to be unfathomable differences. Thus students begin to achieve cultural understanding.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about the Arabic alphabet.
- Appreciate cultural differences.

Materials

Handout 8-1, "The Arabic Alphabet"
Paper, pen

Procedures

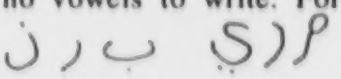
1. Distribute Handout 8-1, "The Arabic Alphabet."

2. Ask each student to list the corresponding English sounds and to note which sounds are included in our (Roman or Latin) alphabet and which are not--example: the Arabic ba is the letter B and so is included in our alphabet, but the Arabic ha with its aspirate H sound has no exact equivalent.

3. Practice pronouncing in unison the Arabic characters, looking at the Arabic names which are shown in the upper left of each box. Disregard the lines over some of the vowels. The first character, the alif, is virtually impossible to pronounce for English-speakers so don't let it worry you--just go on to ba!

4. At some time someone will note that there aren't any vowels, which is correct. Arabic is written using consonants only, although there are some marks which indicate a limited number of vowels.

5. Ask each student to write his/her first and last name using Arabic letters. Be sure to emphasize that each one

must start at the right margin and write toward the left margin. Don't attempt to connect the letters and, of course, there will be no vowels to write. For instance, for Mary Brown: 

The bottom part of the letters should be on the line (which is correct for all but a few letters, but don't worry about the exceptions. Just put all above the line.)

THE ARABIC ALPHABET

Read from right to left.

jīm J ج	thā' Th ث	tā T ت	bā' B ب	alif ا (glottal stop)
rā' R ر	dhāl Dh ذ	dāl D د	khā' Kh خ	hā' H ح
dād Ḍ ض	ṣād Ṣ ص	shīn Sh ش	sīn S س	zāy Z ز
fā' F ف	ghayn Gh غ	'ayn ‘ ع	ẓā' Ẓ ظ	ṭā Ṭ ط
nūn N ن	mīm M م	lām L ل	kāf K ك	qāf Q ق
	yā Y ي	wāw W و	hā' H ه	

A dot below the letter indicates it is aspirated, that is, pronounced while emitting air as in the English letter "h."

The first character, the alif, has a sound of a glottal stop which occurs at the beginning of some English words with an initial vowel, like "apple" or "uncle."

9. ARABIC NUMBERS

Introduction

Numbers in Arabic and in European languages are often quite similar. In this lesson students will readily note the similarities as they learn to write Arabic numbers.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Arabic numbers.
- Appreciate cultural differences.

Materials

Handout 9-1, "Arabic Numbers"
Paper, pen

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 9-1, "Arabic Numbers."

2. Ask each student to practice writing the Arabic numbers until s/he is fairly comfortable with them.

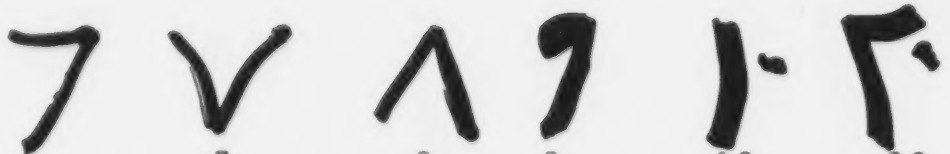
3. Ask each student to make up simple math problems using only Arabic numbers.

4. Remember that numbers in Arabic are written from left to right just as we do.

5. Ask designated students to put one of their problems on the board and let other students comment.

ARABIC NUMBERS

0	1	2	3	4	5
sifr	wahid	itneen	talaata	arba'a	hamsa



6	7	8	9	10	20
sitta	sab'a	tamanya	tis'a	'ashara	'ishrin

10. THE MARKETPLACE

Introduction

Similarities and differences in an outdoor Sierra Leonean market and a Western type grocery store (which you could also visit in Freetown) are readily apparent. West African markets are remarkably flexible and efficient economic institutions as sellers are closely attuned to the needs and demands of their customers.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Sierra Leonean markets.
- Role play a scene from a market.

Materials

Handout 6-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 2: Ibrahim Goes to the Mosque and Visits Downtown Freetown"

Small items which can be bought and sold as part of the role play

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 6-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 2: Ibrahim Goes to the Mosque and Visits Downtown Freetown."

2. Let all students read the part of the handout which describes Ibrahim's visit to the Victoria Street Market.

3. Lead a class discussion on techniques of buying and selling in a Sierra Leonean market.

4. Ask for several students to volunteer to be sellers and for several volunteers to be customers.

5. If possible, put a long table or two together and make this your market area. Behind the tables are the sellers with their wares--paper, pencils, books, etc.

6. Give the sellers time to discuss techniques of bargaining with fellow sellers and give the customers time to discuss ways to approach the sellers and to bargain to get the best price possible.

7. Have the customers and sellers engaged in role play to attempt to replicate as closely as possible the conditions of a West African market. There should be lots of noise and commotion if your students get into the spirit of the thing!

11. PROVERBS IN SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

Proverbs are important aspects of speech in all parts of Africa. A person's ability to use the correct proverb at the most judicious moment indicates that person's wisdom. In African court proceedings at the local (chiefdom) level, the appropriate use of proverbs by people involved in litigation may have a definitive influence on the decision.

Proverbs in the United States and Sierra Leone often teach the same lesson but use different allusions, expressions, and references because the cultural and natural environments are different.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Sierra Leonean culture.
- Note similarities and differences in cultures.

Materials

Handout 11-1, "Sierra Leonean Proverbs and Their U.S. Equivalents"
Handout 11-2, "Krio Proverbs from Sierra Leone"
Handout 11-3, "Proverbs in the Krio Language"

Procedures

1. Discuss: What are proverbs? What are their purposes? Give examples of proverbs from your country.

2. Distribute Handout 11-1, "Sierra Leone Proverbs and Their U.S. Equivalents."

3. Have one student read a Sierra Leonean proverb aloud; then ask a student to find and read a similar U.S. proverb.

4. Ask students to identify words in Sierra Leonean proverbs that reflect the West African environment.

5. Distribute Handout 11-2, "Krio Proverbs from Sierra Leone." Divide the class into groups of four or five. Ask each group to match the U.S. equivalent to the Krio proverb. Then have the groups report their conclusions. Discuss what

words, phrases, and contexts reflect West African society and practices.

6. Distribute Handout 11-3, "Proverbs in the Krio language." Ask the groups to match the English translation with the Krio proverb and let the groups discuss their results. Then discuss, again, what words, phrases, and context reflect West African society and practices.

7. Have a classroom discussion on what you learn about Sierra Leoneans from these proverbs.

Answers

Handout 11-1: 1-C, 2-I, 3-F, 4-A, 5-K, 6-E, 7-J, 8-B, 9-H, 10-D, 11-G.

Handout 11-2: 1-D, 2-F, 3-B, 4-G, 5-A, 6-E, 7-C.

Handout 11-3: 1-F, 2-D, 3-H, 4-A, 5-G, 6-B, 7-E, 8-C.

SIERRA LEONEAN PROVERBS AND THEIR U.S. EQUIVALENTS

Put the letter of the corresponding U.S. proverb in the blank.

Sierra Leonean Proverbs

1._____ If you want help from God, you should be prepared to help yourself. (Mende)

2._____ Sorrel leaves cannot look like any other type of leaf. (Mende)

3._____ A rat that wants to have a full stomach should not be afraid of getting wet. (Mende)

4._____ Oneness splits the pumpkin. (Mende)

5._____ An empty bag cannot stand. (Mende)

6._____ Don't forego the hen for the guinea fowl. (Temne)

7._____ Don't throw stones where you keep bottles. (Temne)

8._____ When someone throws water on your back, scrub yourself. (Temne)

9._____ A mortar from which rice is split will stay the same even during the hungry season. (Limba)

10._____ A frog that does not develop a shapely figure when it is young will hardly develop one when it is full grown. (Limba)

11._____ Don't bite the crab if it embarrasses you. (Limba)

U.S. Equivalents

A. United we stand; divided we fall.

B. When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.

C. God helps those who help themselves.

D. As the twig is bent, so grows the tree.

E. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

F. One must take the bad with the good.

G. If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

H. Waste not, want not.

I. A leopard cannot change its spots.

J. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

K. United we stand; divided we fall

KRIO PROVERBS FROM SIERRA LEONE

Put the letter of the corresponding U.S. proverb next to the Krio proverb.

Krio Proverbs

1._____ The same ship that is loaded with Bibles is loaded with rum.

2._____ Trouble is a bitter tree, but sometimes it produces sweet fruits.

3._____ However tightly packed a house might be, a hen will always find somewhere to lay her eggs.

4._____ The leaf that tastes sweet in a goat's mouth is the leaf that will give it dysentery.

5._____ You are being carried on another's back and yet you are complaining that the road is rather long.

6._____ If you waste time looking at the locked door, you won't see the open window.

7._____ Show joy to the outside world; keep sorrow at home.

U.S. Equivalents

A Don't bite the hand that feeds you.

B. Where there's a will, there's a way.

C. Laugh, and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone.

D. You must take the bad with the good.

E. You can't see the forest for the trees.

F. It's an ill wind that blows no good.

G. You can't have your cake and eat it too.

PROVERBS IN THE KRIO LANGUAGE

Krio is a language from Sierra Leone that is a mixture of English and West African languages. If you read the words aloud, you should be able to recognize some of them.

Try matching the proverb, written in Krio, with its English translation.

Krio Language

1._____ Tay yu ɔja trɔŋ.

2._____ Kil babu, sho mɔnki.

3._____ Uman sabi tɔn wan sent tu tu sent.

4._____ Peshent dɔg it fat bon.

5._____ Wetin man dɔn du, man kin du.

6._____ Elifant ed nɔ to pikin lod.

7._____ I yu nɔno usay yu de go, yu fɔ no usay yu kɔm.

8._____ Twenti ia nɔ to fɔrever.

English Translation

A. The patient dog will get the fat bone.
B. An elephant's head is not a suitable load for a child.
C. Twenty years are not forever.
D. Kill a baboon and show it to a monkey.
E. If you don't know where you are going, you should know from where you came.
F. Tie your sash tightly.
G. What one man has done, other men can do.
H. A woman knows how to turn one cent into two cents.

12. IBRAHIM'S PROBLEM

Part 3: Ibrahim Goes Home for the Holidays

Introduction

Ibrahim goes home to Kenema by lorry. Although most West Africans cannot afford cars, they nevertheless travel frequently and by a variety of types of vehicles. One of the most common modes of transportation is the modified pickup truck just like the one Ibrahim takes from Freetown to Kenema.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about traveling by public transportation in Sierra Leone.
- Learn about Sierra Leonean geography.

Materials

Handout 12-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 3: Ibrahim Goes Home for the Holidays"
Paper, pen

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 12-1, "Ibrahim's Problem, Part 3: Ibrahim Goes Home for the Holidays."

2. Divide the class into groups of four or five.

3. Have each group read the handout either individually within each group or cooperatively.

4. Instruct each group compile a list of important and/or interesting facts, customs, ideas, events, etc. which the members of the group consider significant.

5. Have the chair of each group report to the class the findings and observations of his/her group, followed by a general discussion led by you, the chairs of the groups, or by a committee you appoint or the groups themselves choose.

IBRAHIM'S PROBLEM

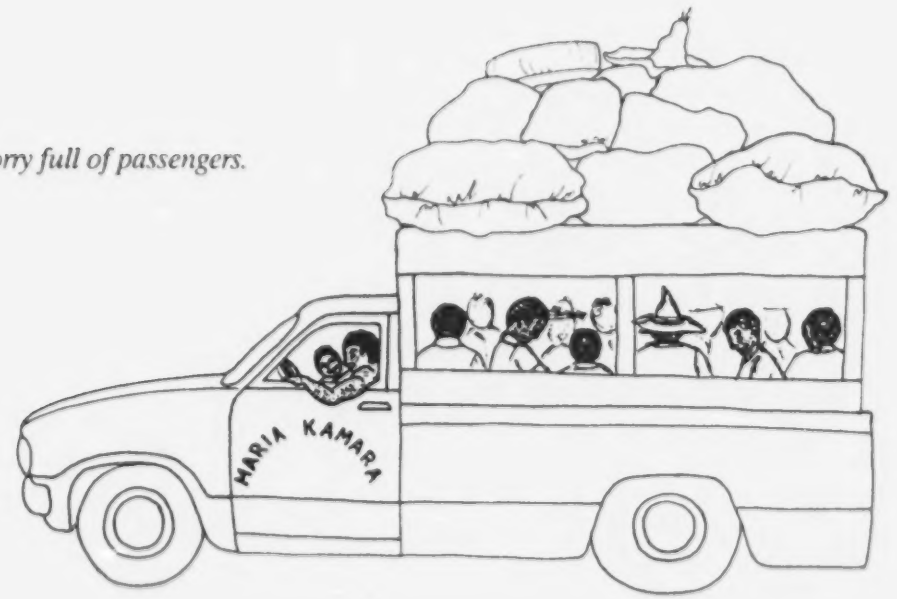
Part 3: Ibrahim Goes Home For The Holidays

A few days after completing his exams at the Grammar School Ibrahim is preparing to go home to Kenema in the southeastern part of the country. Here he will spend the Christmas holidays before returning to Freetown to begin the second term in January. That is, he will return if he can gather together the money to pay his school fees.

The secular festivities of Christmas are celebrated by Christians and Muslims alike as Ibrahim often attends Christmas dances and parties. As a Muslim he does not go to any of the church services, of course.

First, however, he has to travel the 170 miles into the interior to get home. Since it is just four days before Christmas many people who live in Freetown will be traveling in order to spend the holidays with their family and friends in their hometowns. Ibrahim knows that the buses and lorries (pickup trucks) which carry people from one town to another will be even more crowded than usual.

A Lorry full of passengers.



Ibrahim carries one of his suitcases with him as he bids farewell to Aunt Hawa, Uncle Abu, Grandmother Mariama, and his cousins. He takes a city minibus downtown to the parking station where the buses for the interior load their passengers. The station is on the ocean side of downtown and was once the train station for the now abandoned single track line into the interior. Ibrahim arrives at 6:00 a.m. because he realizes that the masses of people who want to travel will be far too many to accommodate in the buses leaving. Some passengers will also go by lorry and some by taxi. The latter method is the most comfortable one, but it also is the most expensive--too much so for Ibrahim. There are, of course, many private cars on the streets but only the relatively financially well-off people can afford a car.

Downtown Freetown.

It is none too soon to arrive at 6:00 a.m. because his city minibus cannot get closer than a block and a half to the station. The surging people block the way. He gets down and starts struggling to push his way to the station. His spirits sink, though, as he sees that already a great many people will not be able to buy tickets. Ibrahim begins to think of what he can do to assure himself of getting one. Suddenly he remembers that one of his former classmates from primary school in Kenema recently started to work for the public transportation authority and perhaps he might be on duty now. If so, he might yet secure a ticket. After being pushed this way and that by the hordes of people, he finally manages to get reasonably close to the station but even so, it is not close enough. Ibrahim, therefore, gives a boy in the street 50 leones to watch his suitcase and wades back into the throng. Finally he enters one of the doors and eventually finds his old friend, John Kamara. John agrees to take Ibrahim's money and to try to get into a back room to buy his ticket. Fifteen minutes later John comes triumphantly back with the prized ticket. Fortunately, Ibrahim does get on one of the buses for Kenema.

Packed in so tightly that breathing seems a major accomplishment, Ibrahim contemplates the 175-mile ride to his hometown, Kenema, a journey by bus of about 5 to 6 hours. The bus will stop at every little settlement and town along the way and for an extended stay in Bo, 130 miles from Freetown and the capital of the southern province. As the bus weaves through the narrow Freetown streets Ibrahim occasionally catches sight of Freetown harbor, the largest on the entire African continent. People carrying items ranging from food to clothes jostle with each other as the crowd extends onto the road right up to the street side of the bus.

In a reflective mood, Ibrahim contemplates the natural site for the city, and as he always does at such times, marvels at its magnificence. Situated on the northern end of a fifty-mile long peninsula, Freetown is surrounded on three sides by water--the harbor to the north and east and the Atlantic on the west. The peninsula range of mountains, the highest almost 3,000 feet, come almost down to the water's edge. At one point Ibrahim gets a glimpse of the campus of Fourah Bay College situated high up on Mt. Aureol overlooking the city, a literal setting of the university ivory tower. It is the oldest Western-style university in Africa having been established by the Church Missionary Society from Britain in 1827. Ibrahim has several friends who attend Fourah Bay.

Eventually the buildings begin to thin out, the highway broadens, and the bus passes the suburban areas of Hastings and Waterloo. The early settlers of African ancestry from Britain who established Freetown in 1787 gave towns English names such as Hastings, Waterloo, Wellington, Wilberforce, Charlotte, Regent, and many more. These names have long since passed into people's minds as indigenous West African names. The bus begins to climb the hills which divided the peninsula at this point from the mainland and as the bus descends Ibrahim gazes at a panorama of the coastal plain stretching into the interior before him. The terrain soon becomes more hilly, though, as the elevation rises to the mountains of the east and northeast, the tallest of which Mt. Bintimani, is 6,381 feet high.

Occasionally all vehicles have to stop for police checks set up on principal roads throughout the country. At least commercial vehicles must stop; usually private automobiles are waved right on through. It is hard to determine what service for the public good the police are performing at these checkpoints as the main thing that happens is that the driver has to give a dash (400 to 500 leones) to the officials before the vehicle is permitted to proceed.

Every time the bus stops children and women descend on it ready to sell their wares through the windows to the passengers. Bananas, oranges, mangoes, small cakes, bread, roast beef on a stick, soft drinks, and much else are the usual choices. A person never has to worry about getting enough to eat on any of these journeys if he or she has the money to buy from these vendors. Ibrahim has a few hundred leones with him so he is able to buy some bread, roast meat, and a Coca Cola at one of the stops.

When people travel in West Africa they immediately engage in conversation with their seat mates or anyone else who happens to be within hearing distance. Ibrahim even knows several fellow travelers, two from Bo and three from Kenema. Almost everyone talks about how wonderful it is to be going home for the Christmas and New Year's holidays, what they will do at home during their visits, how terrible the economic situation in Sierra Leone remains, and many other everyday topics of conversation.

The most common crop Ibrahim sees out the window is rice. Although December is not the right time of the year to see the most extensive rice farms, there are a

good number of them. On most farms women and men do the work by hand. It is a long difficult process from planting to harvesting. Every now and then the road passes some oil palms from which palm oil, a favorite cooking oil, comes. As the bus gets closer to Bo, Ibrahim sees coffee and cocoa trees, both of these products being one of the main exports from Sierra Leone.

By the time the bus pulls into Bo, a city of about 40,000, it is almost 3:00 p.m., five hours after leaving the bus station in Freetown. A lot of passengers leave here and a good number get on to travel the 45 miles to Kenema. The road between Bo and Kenema is one of the best in the country. Much of the highway from Freetown to Waterloo is crisscrossed with potholes and washed out pavement which makes travel slow and rough. Then the road improves somewhat. But from Bo onward to Kenema the pavement is smooth and the road wide.

As the bus arrives in Kenema and heads for the business district in the center of town where it will stop, Ibrahim's thoughts again turn to his financial problems. How will he be able to collect the 4,000 leones for fees for the second term at the Grammar School which starts in January? He knows that his parents can scrape together only about 1,000 leones and that, as usual, he will be forced to visit a number of his relatives and friends to beg for enough money to make up the remainder. Is there a way for his father or his mother to increase their share?

His mother sells vegetables in the central market in town and perhaps she has been able to save more than she normally does since Ibrahim has last seen her in September. But with run-away inflation Ibrahim reflects, in reality, she probably has not saved as much for his fees as she often has in the past. And what of his father, could he possibly contribute more than usual? From the meager salary he receives as a teacher at the Sierra Leone Church primary school, it is not likely that he will have more than his normal amount.

Ibrahim gets down from the bus and collects his suitcase. He is so deeply engrossed in planning how he will attempt to collect his fees that he does not even hear Bockari, his best friend, calling to him as he walks away from the parking station and heads toward home.

13. GEOGRAPHY IN SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

Travel increases your knowledge of geography. In this lesson students will enjoy finding places on their maps of Freetown and Sierra Leone as, in the process, they discover interesting aspects of the geography of Sierra Leone.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Learn about Sierra Leonean geography.
- Improve map reading.

Materials

Handout 13-1, "Freetown City Plan Map"
Handout 13-2 "Sierra Leone Physical Map,"
Handout 13-3, "Sierra Leone Political Map,"
Handout 13-4, "Outline Map of Sierra Leone"
Paper, pen

Procedures

1. Distribute and instruct each student to look at Handout 13-1, "Freetown City Plan Map," and trace on the map the most likely route for a bus to take to go from Ibrahim's home to the post office.

2. Have each student trace on the map the route between Ibrahim's house and the post office which passes the most interesting sights and buildings.

3. Have each student list the sights and buildings which s/he passes on the way to the post office. Have the student locate each of the sights and buildings as carefully as is possible. For example, for the Prince of Wales School (high school for boys) the student could write that it is in the King Tom section of Freetown between Hennesy Street and the Atlantic, more specifically, on Kroo Bay. You might stipulate that each student should list at least one college, two schools, a stadium, a hospital, a church, a government building(s), two scenic sights, etc.

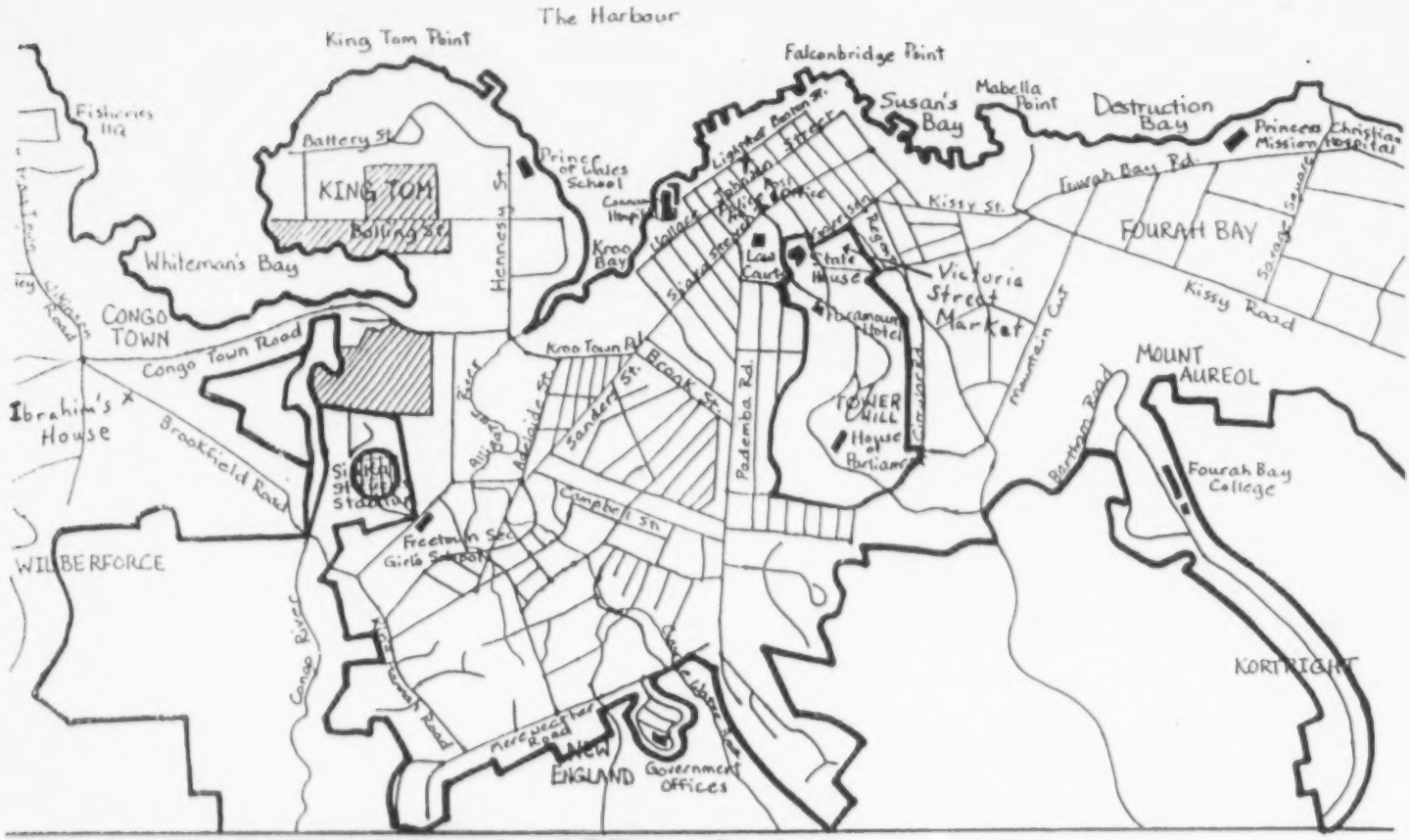
4. Distribute Handout 13-2, "Sierra Leone Physical Map," to each student. Have them list some notable physical features; list the two countries which border Sierra Leone, and find

the highest mountain in the country. Convert the height of the mountain from meters to feet.

5. Distribute Handout 13-3, "Sierra Leone Political Map," to each student. Have them list two towns shown on the map which the bus passed carrying Ibrahim home for the holidays. Then locate Freetown and write its longitude and latitude. Do the same thing for Bo and for Kenema.

6. Handout 13-4 is a blank map of Sierra Leone which is included for your students' use.

7. Be sure to put Sierra Leone's location in West Africa in the context of the entire continent by showing the student the countries location on a wall map of Africa or have them find Sierra Leone on a map of Africa in their textbook.



FREETOWN CITY PLAN

Road
Important Building
Cathedral
Cemetery
Stadium

FREETOWN CITY PLAN MAP

Handout 13-1

SIERRA LEONE PHYSICAL MAP

Sierra Leone – Physical

Meters

- Over 1600
- 800 - 1600
- 400 - 800
- 200 - 400
- 0 - 200

SIERRA LEONE POLITICAL MAP

Sierra Leone—Political

International Boundary ——— Capitol City ★

Province Boundary – – – – – Province Headquarters ■

Main Road ····· District Headquarters ●

OUTLINE MAP OF SIERRA LEONE

14. RECIPES FROM SIERRA LEONE AND WEST AFRICA

Introduction

One of the most effective ways to gain an affective experience is to prepare and eat West African food. You as the teacher, of course, must decide how big a "production" you want this activity to become, because, as you know, such an activity can grow. . .and grow!

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognize different types of West African food.
- Prepare and eat a West African meal.

Materials

Handout 14-1, "Recipes from Sierra Leone and West Africa"
Plenty of paper plates, forks, spoons, etc.

Procedures

1. Divide students into groups and have each group be responsible for a dish. Note: For a main course the jollof rice is probably the least likely to cause too many complaints among the students that they can't possibly eat this. Also good is the peanut stew which is served over rice. Both of these dishes are popular in Sierra Leone and, in fact, throughout West Africa from Senegal to Ivory Coast. Akara (cakes made from black-eyed peas) from Nigeria make a good side dish. For a really filling dessert try the banana fritters recipe from Liberia. Enjoy!

2. Have students prepare food at home if unable to cook at school.

3. Have a dinner as one of the culminating events of the term.

RECIPES FROM SIERRA LEONE AND WEST AFRICA

West Africans eat a wide variety of foods, just as do people from all over the world. There are some similar features, however, in much of West African cooking. For instance, depending on which part of West Africa you are considering, there is a staple food which is prepared and put on the plate first. Then a stew, or sauce, is served over the staple. Among the common staples are rice in much of the western part of West Africa, including Sierra Leone, or cassava in much of southern Nigeria. The stews are made from various types of vegetables or greens, with spices, onions, perhaps tomato paste, and lots of pepper, particularly in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Different kinds of meat are cut up in small pieces and added to the stew, common types being chicken, beef, and fish. There is no pork in Muslim households as Islam forbids the eating of this meat.

Long loaves of bread and tea are popular at breakfast in Sierra Leone. You fix the bread with butter and jam, or eat the bread plain. Fruit is common bananas, oranges, grapefruit, pineapple, mangoes, papaya (called paw-paw), lemons, limes, tangerines, and many more!

Here are some recipes. Try them!

Peanut Stew on Rice
from Sierra Leone

Ingredients:
2 pounds of chicken or 2 pounds of stewing meat or 2 pounds of hamburger, just about any kind of meat you want
1 onion, diced
pepper to taste
1/2 - 3/4 cup of peanut butter
1 small can of tomato paste
salt to taste and any other spices you like\garlic powder is good
2 1/2 cups of water

Steps for cooking:
1. Cut meat into bite-sized pieces (if you're not using hamburger).
2. Brown meat, onion, and pepper.
3. Put this mixture in a large cooking pot.
4. Dilute peanut butter with a small amount of water (from your 2 1/2 cups) and add it to the mixture in the pot.
5. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well.
6. Cover the pot and quickly bring to a boil, then reduce to low heat, and simmer for 20-30 minutes.
7. Serve the peanut stew over rice. It's delicious!

Jollof Rice
from Sierra Leone

Ingredients:
1 - 1 1/2 pounds of chicken or 1 - 1 1/2 pounds of beef or
1 - 1 1/2 pounds of hamburger, or just about any kind of meat you desire
3/4 cup of diced onion
1 can of mixed vegetables, drained, or 1 package of frozen mixed vegetables
1 small can of tomato paste
1/2 cup of vegetable oil
salt and pepper to taste, and other spices you might want to add
3 cups of water
3 cups of uncooked rice (regular, not instant rice)

Steps for cooking:
1. Brown your meat (or if you are preparing chicken, cook it in any way you prefer and then take it off the bone).
2. Cut up the meat into bite-size pieces.
3. Put the meat into a large, heavy pot.
4. Using the same frying pan in which you browned the meat, saute the diced onion and place it in the pot.
5. Then put the mixed vegetables (thawed, if frozen), the tomato paste, vegetable oil, salt and pepper to taste, any other spices which you might want to add, and water into the pot and stir until everything is thoroughly mixed.

6. Bring to a quick boil, then immediately reduce the heat, and simmer for about 10 minutes.
7. Add the three cups of uncooked rice to the mixture and mix thoroughly.
8. Cook on low heat for 40-45 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Akara
cakes made from black-eyed peas
from Nigeria

Ingredients:
1 cup of black-eyed peas
1 medium size onion, diced
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup of vegetable oil
fish or shrimp (optional)

Steps for cooking:
1. Soak the black-eyed peas in water for 15 minutes.
2. Rub the black-eyed peas between the palms of your hands to remove the skins.
3. Wash the remaining skins off in water.
4. Blend the black-eyed peas in a blender until they liquify.
5. Add the salt and diced onion
6. Add the fish or shrimp (after deveining and skinning).
7. Fry small pieces of the mixture in the vegetable oil until golden brown and serve hot.

Banana Fritters
from Liberia

Ingredients:
4 overripe bananas
3 1/2 cups of flour
4 eggs lightly beaten
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon or 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg (or a blend of the two)
2 teaspoons of baking powder
1/2 cup of milk

Steps for cooking:

1. Puree the bananas in a blender.
2. Mix banana puree, flour, eggs, spice(s), baking powder, and milk.
3. Two ways to cook:

   a. to deep fry, heat shortening or vegetable oil to 375 degrees in a deep pan, drop spoonsful of batter into the pan, and fry until they are golden brown; drain off excess oil on paper towels.

   b. to fry in a frying pan, heat the pan until it is moderately hot, put batter in the pan as you would pancakes, and fry until a golden brown.

4. Eat with butter and jam, with butter and syrup, or just plain. Enjoy!

15. CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Introduction

To work this puzzle students must marshal the knowledge which they have gained about Sierra Leone to answer questions which range over a wide variety of subjects.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Discover information concerning Sierra Leone.
- Work a crossword puzzle.

Materials

Handout 15-1, "Crossword Puzzle"
Handout 15-2, "Crossword Puzzle Questions"
Handout 15-3, "Crossword Puzzle Answers"
Copies of all the other handouts

Procedures

1. Distribute Handout 15-1, "Crossword Puzzle" and Handout 15-2, "Crossword Puzzle Questions."

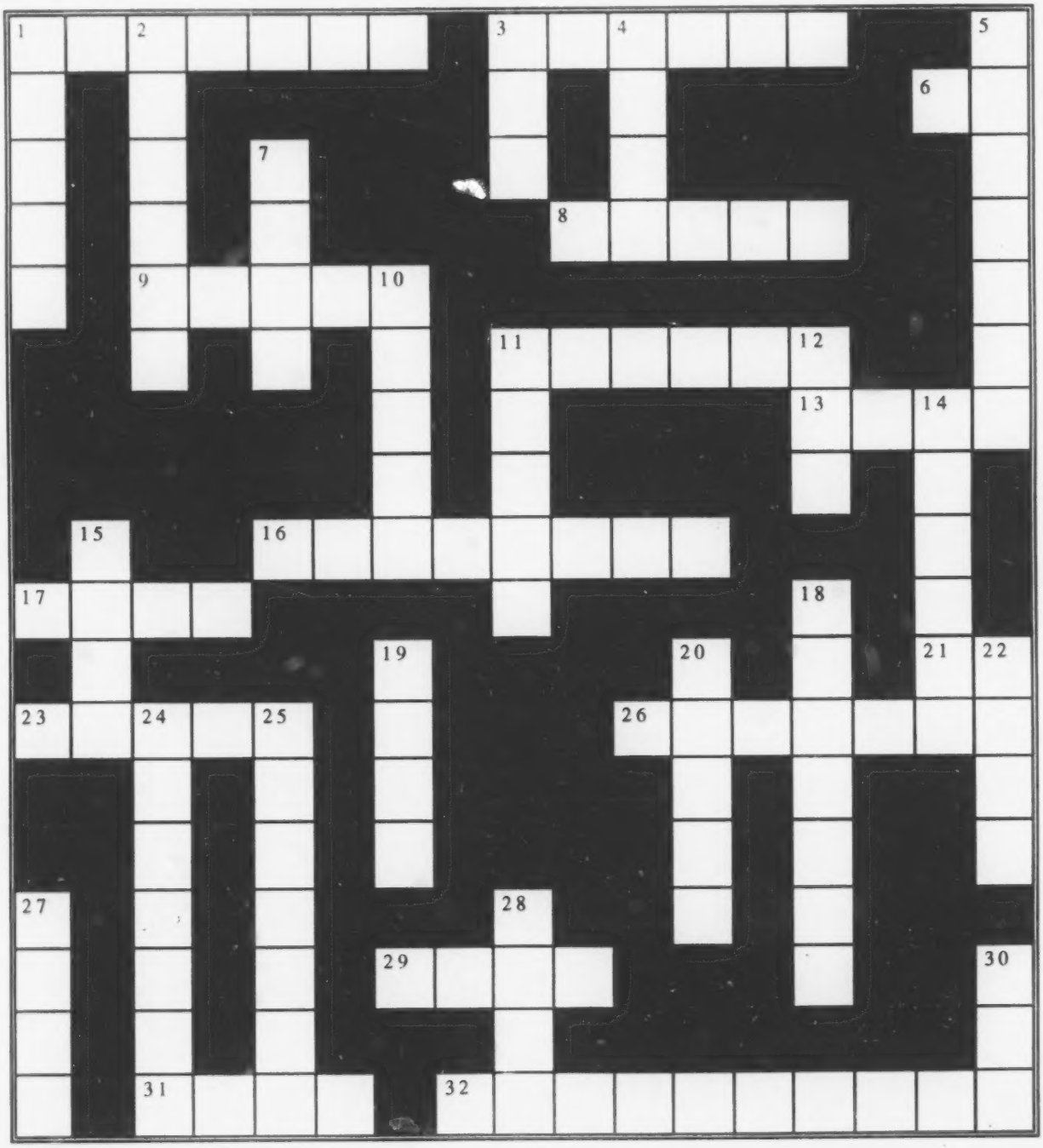
2. Distribute all the other handouts.

3. You may divide the students into groups to work the puzzle collectively or they can do it individually.

4. Let the students check their work by distributing Handout 15-3, "Crossword Puzzle Answers."

5. Discuss answers with students.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Handout 15-2

CROSSWORD PUZZLE QUESTIONS

Across

1. oldest secondary school in Africa (two words and leave one space between the words)
6. one of the largest cities in Sierra Leone; a stop on Ibrahim's bus trip home
8. the last name of the oldest secondary school for girls in Africa
9. the religion with the largest number of followers in Sierra Leone
11. Ibrahim's hometown
13. cook the bread Ibrahim buys in the Victoria Street Market
16. Sierra Leone's capital city
17. Sierra Leone's staple food
21. Ibrahim's uncle's initials
23. Show joy to the outside world; keep sorrow at home is a proverb from this ethnic group.
26. first name for girls
29. another first name for girls
31. first name for boys
32. flowering plant which grows outside Ibrahim's bedroom window

Down

1. one of the countries belonging to the West African Examinations Council
2. language in which Muslims say their prayers
3. to plant the staple food
4. name of Ibrahim's aunt
5. name of many praise-singers and oral historians in Manding areas of West Africa
7. mountains in northern Sierra Leone
10. An empty bag cannot stand is a proverb from this ethnic group
11. name associated with rulers in Manding areas of West Africa
12. name of Ibrahim's uncle
14. a greeting in Krio
15. to go up to get over the Peninsula Mountains
18. what Ibrahim wears to school
19. Manding name often associated with the profession of trader or merchant
20. first name for girls in Sierra Leone
22. month in the rainy season in Sierra Leone
24. place where Muslims worship (plural)
25. language of instruction in the schools in Sierra Leone
27. subject Ibrahim studies at school
28. the lingua franca in Sierra Leone
30. river in southern Sierra Leone

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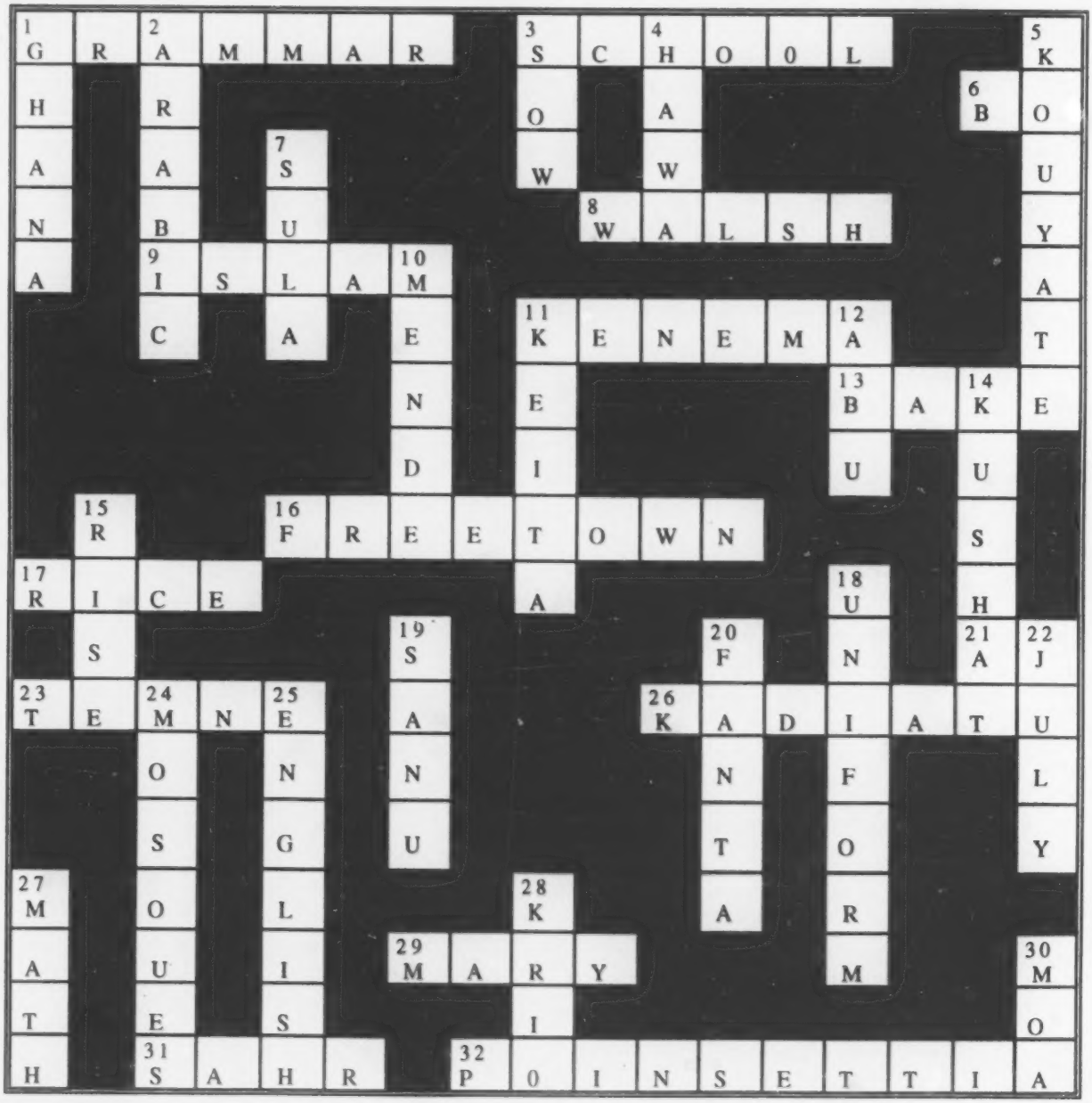
CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS



16. SIERRA LEONE BEE

Introduction

Students must draw on their knowledge of Sierra Leonean life and culture and their higher order thinking skills in order to develop questions which discriminate among what is most important, what is moderately important, and what is interesting but not as significant. The fun comes when groups have different ideas of where a particular question falls into the categories and they vigorously defend their positions.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Assess the knowledge they have acquired about Sierra Leone to determine what is most important.
- Organize important information they have about Sierra Leone and Sierra Leoneans.

Materials

All of the handouts in the unit

Procedures

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five and distribute copies of the handouts to each group.

2. Have each group prepare ten (or whatever number you prefer) questions which incorporate the most important information on Sierra Leone in the judgment of the students in that group.

3. Have each group prepare ten questions which incorporate questions of middle level importance.

4. Have each group make out ten questions which incorporate questions using information which, while not as noteworthy as the previous two groups of questions, is interesting for one reason or another to members of that group.

5. Form a committee of five or six students, or perhaps one student from each group, to select questions from the three levels which will then be used in the Sierra Leone Bee.

6. Conduct a Sierra Leone Bee using the student groups as the contesting sides. Make up your own rules about procedures to follow in the Bee.

17. WRITING AN ESSAY ON SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

An interesting culminating activity and one which involves a number of the higher level thinking skills is to have the students write an essay into which they incorporate a number of elements of life in Sierra Leone. This activity can be as ambitious or as limited as you want to make it.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Synthesize information learned about Sierra Leone and use it in an original paragraph or essay.
- Be creative in writing.
- Improve writing skills.

Materials

All of the handouts on Sierra Leone
Paper, pencil, typewriter, or computer

Procedures

1. Ask the students to write a paragraph in which they describe/discuss an aspect of life in Sierra Leone.

2. Ask students to write several paragraphs in which they describe/discuss a typical day in the life of a Sierra Leonean youth.

3. Ask the students to write an essay in which they land at Lungi Airport, Freetown, for a visit in Sierra Leone. The students could write about schools, markets, the people, or whatever interests them about the country.

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